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CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING SALE TOTALS $113,627,500/£75,751,667/€90,180,556

SIX WORLD AUCTION RECORDS SET FOR ARTISTS: JOSEPH CORNELL, YAYOI KUSAMA, AGNES MARTIN, ROBERT IRWIN, PAUL MCCARTHY, TOM WESSELMANN

New York – Christie's Evening Sale of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* totaled $114 million, with 68% sold by lot. New world auction records were set for six artists, including Joseph Cornell, Yayoi Kusama, Robert Irwin, and Paul McCarthy, and for works on paper by Tom Wesselmann and Agnes Martin. Buyers were 59% American, 18% European, and 24% other.

Marc Porter, President of Christie's Americas, states: *"This Evening Sale confirmed the return of the American private collector with strong prices achieved for highly sought-after works by artists such as Joseph Cornell, Yayoi Kusama, and Paul McCarthy. These results demonstrate that buyers continue to collect works of art against a difficult economic background, reinforcing the relative stability of art as a store of value. Works on paper performed well, including the group of American Post-War Drawings from a Private Collection, and The Collection of Robert and Jean Shoenberg, which sold 100% by lot."*

Christie's Evening Sale was led by *Abstraktes Bild (710),* 1989 by Gerhard Richter, which achieved $14,866,500 million. The sale's cover lot, Jean-Michel Basquiat's *Untitled (Boxer)*, 1982, sold for $13,522,500, the second highest price at auction for the artist. One of the most important works by Basquiat to come to auction, *Untitled (Boxer)* features an exhilarating depiction of a black heavy-weight fighter, which the artist saw as a self-portrait. The painting was executed at the height of Basquiat's creative development and fame, and demonstrates his signature blend of raw primitivism and classical portraiture.

A rare monochrome *No. 2* by Yayoi Kusama was the object of active bidding, and sold for $5,794,500, obtaining a world auction record for the renowned Post-War Japanese artist. *No. 2* is from the *Infinity Nets* series of 1959 that the artist created soon after her arrival in New York, and marks the first step in a highly original artistic career.

Another auction record was achieved for Joseph Cornell's *Pharmacy*, 1943, which sold for $3,778,500. The work has a storied provenance, having been acquired by Mrs. Marcel Duchamp from the Estate of Pierre-Noel Matisse.

A highlight of the sale was a superlative grouping of drawings *Master Drawings of American Post-War Art from a Private Collection.* Featuring works by Arshile Gorky, Willem de Kooning, Barnett Newman, and Agnes Martin, the collection sold 81% by lot. An outstanding drawing by Arshile Gorky, *Study for Agony I*, 1946-47, achieved $2,210,500, Willem de Kooning's radical rendition of the female figure, *Woman*, 1951, sold for $2,770,500, Agnes Martin's wondrous cerulean-blue watercolor, *Starlight*, 1951 set a world auction record for a work on paper by the artist at $542,500, and Barnett Newman's luminous and stunning, *Untitled*, 1946 sold for $2,994,500.

In addition, the sale featured *Property from the Collection of Robert and Jean Shoenberg*, which sold 100% by lot and included a lyrical oil on paper *Composition,* 1958 by Mark Rothko, that achieved $3,666,500, and a masterful work on paper by Tom Wesselmann, *Study for Great American Nude*, 1961 which fetched $986,500 and set an auction record for a work on paper by the artist.

Jeff Koons was represented by *Buster Keaton* of 1988, which sold for $4,338,500 and demonstrated the continuation of Koons's Duchampian legacy. The work depicts the silent film icon after which it was named.

The sale drew additional world auction records for Robert Irwin *Untitled*, painted in 1963-1964 ($1,058500), and Paul McCarthy, *Michael Jackson Fucked Up (Big Head)* ($2,210,500).

Note: Christie's also achieved $7,276,500 for Post-War and Contemporary works sold as part of last week's sales from The Collection of Alice Lawrence.

Tomorrow's auctions continue with the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Day Sales*.

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global art sales in 2007 that totalled £3.1 billion/$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. For the first half of 2008, art sales totalled £1.8 billion / $3.5 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from $200 to over $80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai, Hong Kong and Zurich. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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